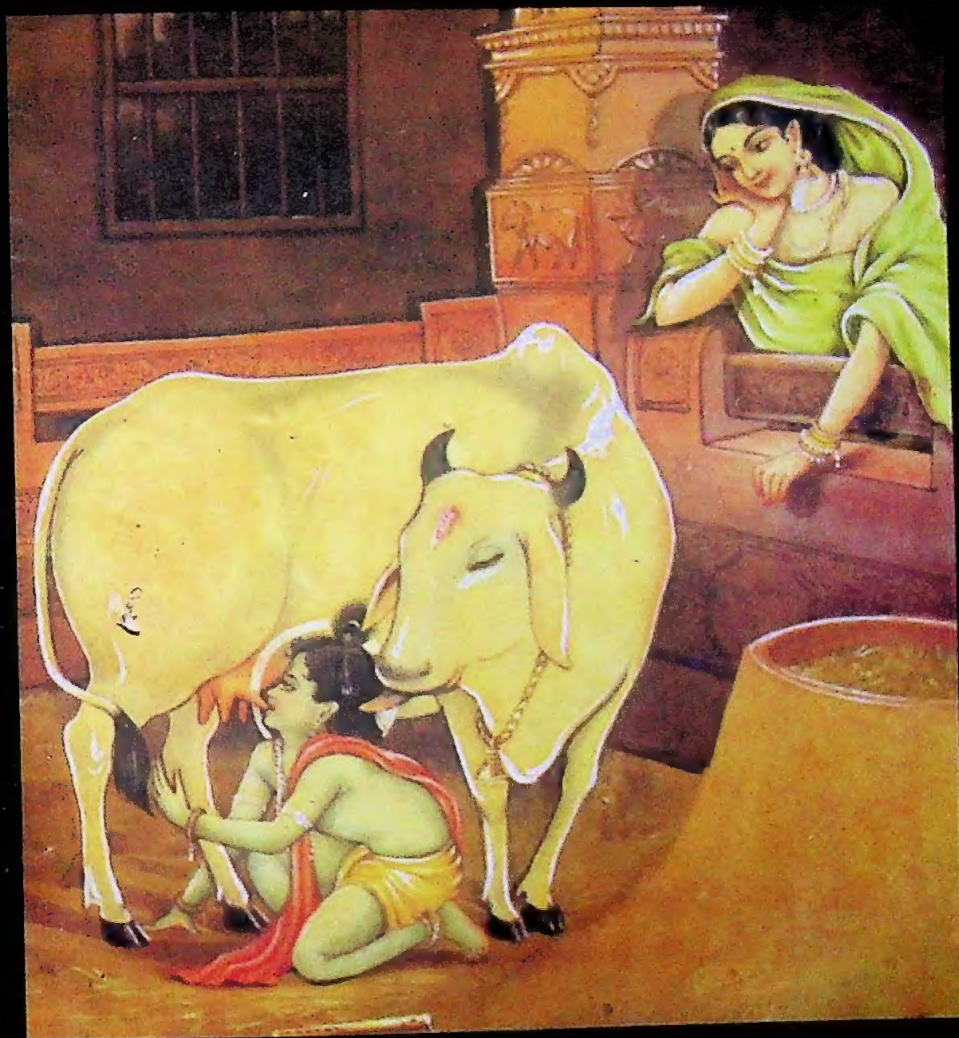


THE PAVITRA GO

What is the significance of "Go-seva"?



Based on the Teachings of
HIS HOLINESS SRI SRI HARIDAS SHASTRI MAHARAJ JI
*** **

This ancient land had a spiritual culture that was meant for the welfare of the entire human race. It had "Go" as its basis. But that culture is all but gone! In this booklet we bring to light the ancient wisdom and significance behind serving the Pavitra Go.

Mātaruḥ sarvabhūtānām gāvaḥ sarvasukhapradāḥ
"Go are mothers of all creatures and givers of all bliss"

SRI GADHARA-GAURAHARI PRESS, VRINDAVAN

The Pavitra Go

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By

Disciples of
His Holiness Sri Sri Haridas Shastri Maharaj ji

Japesh Bandyopadhyay
&
Paromita Bandyopadhyay

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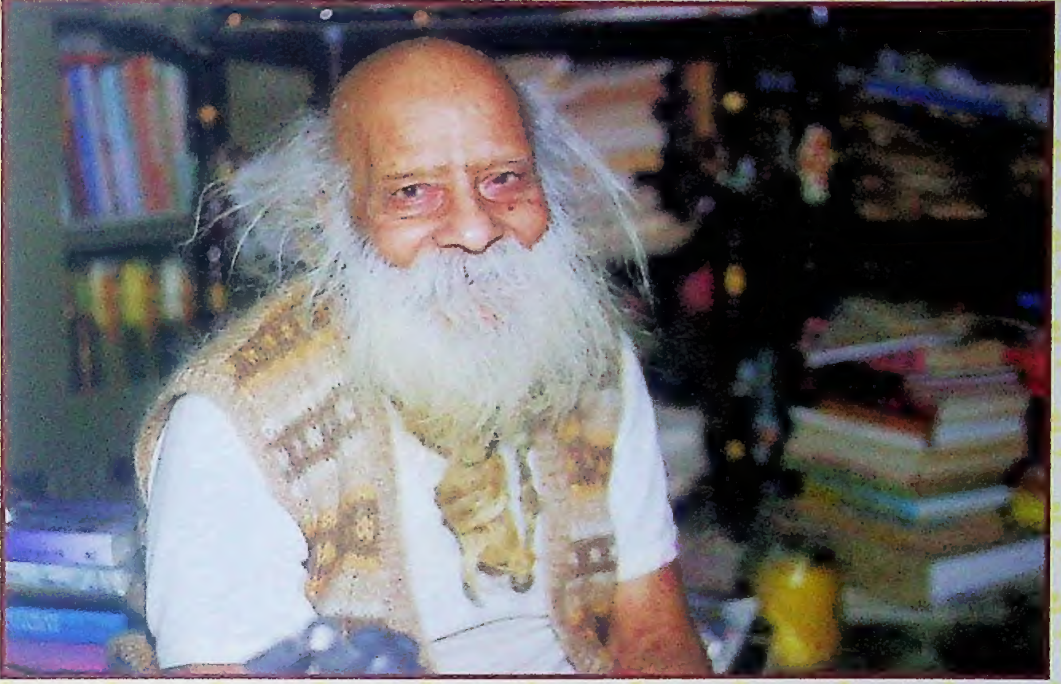


***Namo brahmaṇya-devāya go-brāhmaṇa hitāya ca
Jagaddhitāya kṛṣṇāya govindāya namo namaḥ***

Obeisance to Brahmaṇya-deva (Krishna), Who works for the welfare of the Go and the Brāhmaṇas!

Obeisance! Obeisance to Krishna, Who works for the welfare of the world, and Who pleases the Go!

DEDICATION



Dedicated to our

śrotrīya brahmaniṣṭha gurudeva

His Holiness Sri Sri Haridas Shastri Maharaj ji

[nyāya-vaiśeṣika śāstrī, navya-nyāya ācārya, vyākaraṇa tīrtha, kāvyā tīrtha,
sāṅkhya tīrtha, mīmāṃsā tīrtha, tarka tīrtha (pratyakṣa), tarka tīrtha
(anumāna), nyāya tīrtha, vedānta tīrtha, vaiṣṇava-darśana tīrtha,
vidyā ratna]

who mercifully gave us the opportunity to sit at his hallowed feet and receive
few drops of nectar emanating from his magnanimous heart
that remains immersed in the ocean of

Uttamā Bhakti

The Pavitra Go

Table of contents

	Page
What is the significance of "Go-sevā"?	1
1. "Dharma" nurtures all	1
2. "Bhakti"- The quintessence of all Dharma	2
3. The essence of Bhakti – ekatā and ānukūlya	3
4. "Go" – ānukūlya at its peak!	4
5. Go and Sri Krishna – reciprocating ānukūlya	5
6. Lifting a hill for the cause of Go!	6
7. The Lord becomes Go!	6
8. Go, the inseperable companion of Lord Shiva	7
9. Go - The abode of all devīs and devatās	9
10. Benefits of Go-sevā	10
11. A panacea for the ailing human society	11
12. Go, the universal mother	12
13. The true meaning of Go-sevā	12
14. Go refers to the species of Bharat-Varsh only	13
15. Human Culture, Economy and Go	14
16. The despicable scenario of Materialism today	14
"Sri Haridas Niwas" – An Ideal Go-sālā	17
1. The Founder	18
2. Go-sevā – The mood of true sevā	19
3. The unique Ashram dedicated to Go-sevā	20
4. Anukūlya through "laddus"!	24
5. "Sri Haridas Niwas", also a major centre for spiritual studies	26

What is the significance of “Go-seva”?

“Go-sevā?” The modern, elite man will ask with a bit of cynicism, “Why Go-sevā, of all things? What is so special about Go? They are just animals!”

“Yeah,” we would respond, “But they are much more than mere animals; and you stand to gain beyond your imagination if you serve them. Our forefathers were wise enough to appreciate the incredible nature of theirs and hence Go, together with Tulsi, used to be a part of every household earlier.”

Since times ancient, Go has been considered to be *pavitra*, i.e. the one who is beyond any kind of contamination and the one who has the power to purify. In this work we explain the true understanding behind the *pavitratā*, or sacredness of Go. We also elucidate the significance of *Go-sevā* and how it can be beneficial to the entire human race.

To begin with, we need to understand certain basic concepts. Read on

“Dharma” nurtures all

In the *Mahābhārata*, *Śānti Parva*, chap. 109, *Dharma* is described as

Dhāraṇāt dharma ityāhuḥ

It implies that *dharma* is that which supports all, which protects all and which nurtures all. Thus, through *dharma*, one protects and nurtures one's own self, one's family, one's society, one's country, and eventually the whole mankind. The principles of *dharma* inculcate within the practitioner several good qualities that make him work for the welfare of all.

Prominent among these are the two qualities of *paropakāra* and *niraparādha*.

The word *Paropakāra* means working for the welfare of others. Hence a *paropakārī* person is munificent and serves others selflessly. *Niraparādha* means not to cause suffering, distress or misery. Thus, *niraparādhī* means a person who does not cause distress to anybody in any way. It is easy to appreciate that these two qualities, if inculcated within the people of the society, have the power to completely transform the face of the world.

"Dharma" is that which supports all, which protects all and which nurtures all.

The Creator of this world intends that mankind live in peace and harmony. He is pleased with those individuals who are *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī*. For helping us understand and establish these two qualities within us, He has created an ideal example of *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* creature. And that creature is called "Go" in Sanskrit. Before proceeding further, let us understand the concepts of "*bhakti*" and "*sevā*".

"Bhakti" – The quintessence of all Dharma

There are different *dharma*s for individuals with different mental inclinations. But the most sublime of all *dharma*s is to develop *bhakti* towards the Supreme Lord. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* (1.2.6) tells us:

sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmah yato bhaktiradhokṣaje

"That, indeed, is the most sublime *dharma* of men, which results in *bhakti* of *Adhokṣaja*, the Supreme Lord."

The term "*bhakti*" needs some elaboration. Today, most people understand *bhakti* to be merely a set of rituals like doing *pūjā*, going to temples, doing *kīrtana*, etc. But the Lord explains in the scriptures that the essence of *bhakti* is to have an attitude of selfless service of the Lord. This selfless service performed by the *bhakta* (*bhakta* is one who performs *bhakti*) is technically called *sevā*. *Sevā* means that the *bhakta* acts only for pleasing the Lord and for no other purpose whatsoever, not even for his own pleasure. The one and only one thought that finds its way into his mind is the thought of pleasing the Lord. Even the thought of his own *mukti* (liberation) holds no significance!

"That, indeed, is the most sublime dharma of men, which results in bhakti of Adhokṣaja, the Supreme Lord" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.6)

The urge to do *sevā* of the Lord comes only from interactions with a *bhakta*, i.e. from a person who is already engaged in serving the Lord. On receiving inspiration from such a *bhakta* one accepts him as his guru. He then engages in *sevā* of the guru. This *sevā* then matures into *sevā* of the Lord and eventually into *sevā* of the entire creation since the creation belongs to Him.

The essence of Bhakti – ekatā & ānukūlya



The crux of *bhakti* is to practise *sevā* of the Lord.

To elaborate further on the concept of *sevā*, true *sevā* towards an individual means to have an attitude of pleasing him or her and never to allow any form of distress to come to him or her. While doing so, the mind of the one who serves is focused entirely on the one being served. He is so much concerned about the one being served, and is so oblivious of his personal pleasures and pains that his heart and mind is said to have become one with the heart and mind of the one being served. This is called the stage of “*ekatā*,” which literally means “one-ness.” When *ekatā* occurs, he thinks what the served one thinks, and he feels what the served one feels. In fact, independent likes and dislikes of the one who serves cease to exist. His mind and heart becomes one with the mind and heart of the served one.

When *ekatā* occurs in the mind and heart, the actions done by the one who serves are always in accordance with what the served one likes. Such actions that always satisfy the served one are said to be “*anukūla*” towards the served one. In other words, such actions are called actions done in “*ānukūlya*.”

The crux of *bhakti* is to practise *sevā* of the Lord. Thus, it means that we should have *ekatā* in heart and mind with the Lord and always practise *ānukūlya* of the Lord and His creation. Maintaining this attitude at all times, irrespective of the environment one lives in, is the supreme form of “*bhakti*”.

Thus we can say that one who performs *ānukūlya* of the Lord completely is the ideal *bhakta*. The fact that perfect devotees are filled with *ānukūlya* is explained beautifully in the book, *Śrī govinda-līlāmṛtam* (verse 13.113),

*Tṛptāvanyajanasya tṛptimayitā duḥkhe mahāduḥkhitāḥ
Labdhaiḥ svīyāliduḥkhanicayairnoharṣabādhodayāḥ
Sveṣṭārādhana tatparā iha yathā śrīvaiṣṇava śreṇayaḥ
Kāstā brūhi vicārya candravadane tā madvayasyā imaḥ*

“They feel satisfied when others feel satisfied, they feel distressed when they see others in distress, yet any amount of self-happiness or self-distress neither makes them feel elated nor morose, and they are always enthusiastic to serve one's *iṣṭa deva* – such are the devotees ...”

“Go” – *ānukūlya* at its peak!

The two qualities that the Lord loves most are the qualities of being *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* explained earlier. The fact that “Go” is extremely *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* cannot be over-emphasized. Go are so very *paropakārī* that even the faeces that they produce are holy! No Vedic *yajna* is complete unless the place is purified by Go dung. *Pañca-gavya*, the holy ambrosial drink offered during certain Vedic rituals contains milk, *ghee*, curd, dung and urine of Go. One may compare this with the fact that the faeces of even saints and *devatās* are extremely impure. Hence, even worshipable, divine and holy human beings will shy away from competing with Go on the ground of being *paropakārī*!



The Go performs *ānukūlya* of the Lord by serving His creation in many different ways. Hence they are extremely dear to the Lord.

While human beings, who wish to progress on the path of *bhakti*, need to strive to give up their false ego and practice *ānukūlya*, the case of "Go," the special creation of God, is quite different. Their natural existence itself is meant for practising *ānukūlya* of the Lord and His creation. They need not strive to give up their false ego and acquire purity. They are born pure. They are ideals of *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* beings created by the Lord. They are examples of creatures that do nothing but serve this creation of the Lord, and thus they are examples of *ānukūlya* at its peak! They are born devotees of the Lord!

Go and Sri Krishna – reciprocating ānukūlya

God has created various species of life to accommodate *jīvātmās* (souls) having different kinds of *karma* and different desires. But the form of a Go is something beyond that. It is a special creature, an ideal that the Lord has created, by serving which we ourselves can become *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī*. Hence God Himself has a special affinity for Go, so much so that He gives the Go a special place in His eternal spiritual abode, which lies beyond the material creation.

tām vām vāstunyaśmasi gamadhye yatra gāvo bhūrisṛṅgāḥ ayāsaḥ

"We all are desirous of reaching Your abode where live the auspicious Go adorned with big horns, who fulfill all our desires". *ṛk mantras* (1.154.6)

Lord Sri Krishna, as a little baby, was able to kill the demoness Putana. It is clear that He could have killed Kamsa too as a baby in Mathura. Hence his moving away to Gokul was not out of fear of Kamsa. He did that for the sake of demonstrating to the world the importance of *Go-sevā*.

Everything associated with Him are related to Go. His names are Gopal and Govind. The place that He lived in is Gokul. The community that He lived with was that of the *gopas* and *gopīs*. His main activity in Sri Vraja Dham was to serve "Go". More than Vedic studies or material wealth or performance of difficult penances, it is the simple and sincere "*Go-seva*" of the *Vraja-vāsīs* that had attracted the Lord towards them.



Since Go performs *ānukūlya* of the Lord to the highest degree, the Lord loves Go. And since the Lord loves *ānukūlya*, the Go performs it!

In Vraja, together with the *Vraja-vāsīs*, He demonstrated that spiritual endeavours eventually culminate in pure *bhakti*, whose essence is *ekatā* and *ānukūlya*. This is the important teaching that we get from the *lilas* of Sri Krishna in Sri Vraja-dham.

Since Go performs *ānukūlya* of the Lord to the highest degree, the Lord loves Go. And since the Lord loves *ānukūlya*, the Go performs it!

Lifting a hill for the cause of Go!

While in this world, The Lord performed a *līla* to demonstrate how He protects those who serve Go. Once He advised the residents of Vraja not to worship Indra but to worship the Govardhana hill since the hill nourished the Go of Vraja by providing grazing and resting ground for them. Since the *Vraja-vāsīs* did so, the enraged Indra caused a heavy downpour on Vraja with the intention of inundating the place. The Lord then performed an amazing miracle. He lifted the entire hill on the little finger of His left hand and held it above the residents of Vraja as a canopy! He stood thus for seven days and nights protecting those who perform *Go-seva*. *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛtam* (1.1.7) says

Govardhano jayati sailakulādhirājaḥ yo gopikā'bhirudito haridāsavaryyaḥ

"All glories to Govardhana, which is like the king amongst all hills and whom the *gopīs* of Sri Vraja Dham addressed as the best amongst the servants of the Lord."



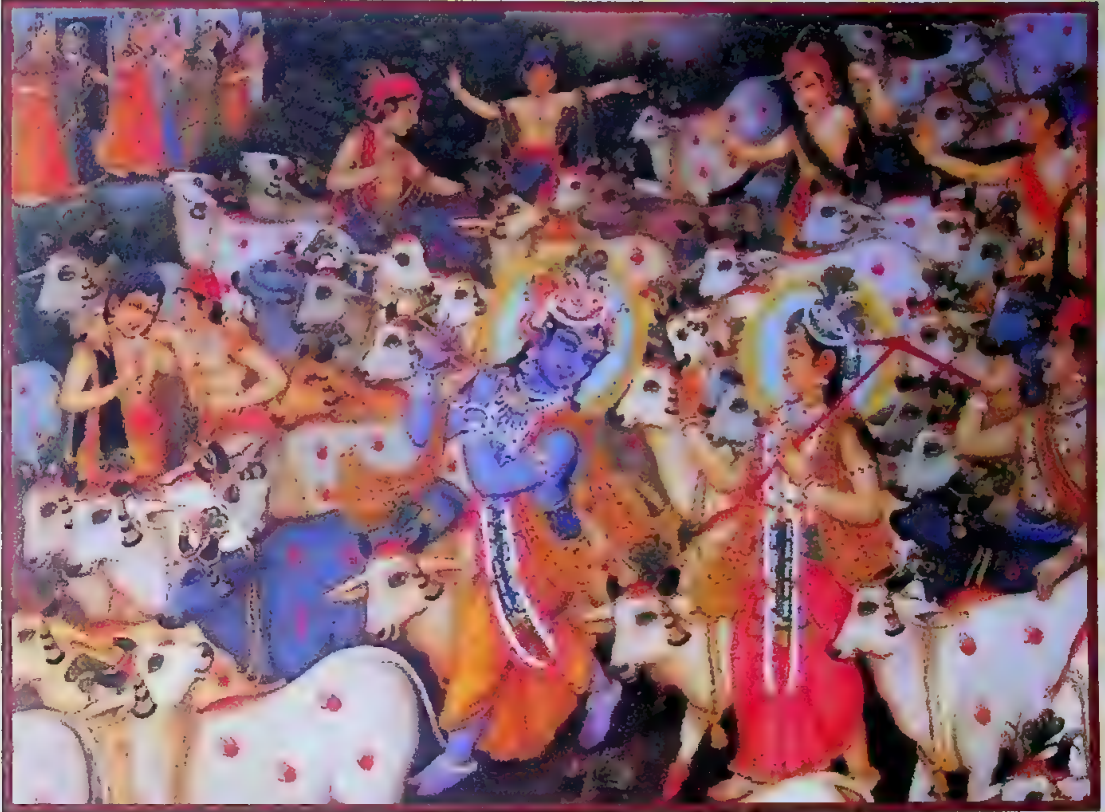
Sri Krishna immortalised the Govardhana hill by lifting it since the hill provided grazing and resting grounds to the Go.

The Govardhana hill (as the name itself suggests) provided pasture and resting place for the Go of Vraja. This service alone qualified it to be called the best amongst the servants of the Lord, whom the Lord immortalised by lifting on His finger. Such is the glory of one who performs *Go-sevā*!

The Lord becomes Go!

Once, when Brahma stole the Go of Vraja, Sri Krishna expanded Himself into the innumerable Go of Vraja and remained thus for one full year, eating grass and living in *Go-sālās*. Since the Lord is very particular to ensure that the human beings not be bereft of the beneficial association of Go even for a day, He Himself became the Go of Vraja for a year! This happened about 5000 years ago and the calves produced by Sri

Krishna (in the form of Go) produced further offsprings. Some descendants of Sri Krishna live in the form of Go in this holy land even today!



When Brahma stole the Go of Krishna in Vrindavan, Lord Krishna expanded Himself to become the innumerable Go, and lived thus for one year.

Go, the inseparable companion of Lord Shiva

This holy land of ours is dotted with innumerable Shiva *lingas* where devotees flock daily to offer prayers. Inseparable from the Lord is His constant companion, the bull named Nandi, to whom the devotees make offerings too. Thus, the Lord demonstrates that Go must be served with equal devotional fervour as He Himself should be served. His *abhiṣeka* is never complete without the use of Go's milk.

All glories to Lord Shiva who keeps Go as an inseparable companion of Himself!



Nandi, the Go, the idol of whom accompanies every Shiva *linga* all the time.



Inseparable from Lord Shiva is His constant companion, the bull named Nandi, to whom the devotees make offerings too.



Nandi, the Go associated with Lord Shiva, was worshipped even during ancient times. This bull, commonly seen on Harappan seals, is considered by many historians to be a depiction of Lord Shiva's Nandi.

Go – The abode of all devīs and devatās

The *Skandapurāṇa* (*Avantya, Revā*, Chapter 83 Verse 104-112) says,

"Go is the abode of all *devatās* and all Vedas are completely linked to the Go. On the tip of their horns resides Indra eternally. Sri Kartikeya is in the heart. Lord Brahma is in the head and Lord Shiva resides on the forehead. Suryadevata and Chandradevata are in the eyes. *Devi Sarasvati* resides in the tongue. The Maruts and *Saddhya devatā* are in the teeth. The sound of the Veda *mantras* along with all the *aṅga, pada*, and *krama* exist in the voice of the Go. Innumerable *ṛṣis* and ascetics live in the pores of the skin. The strict enforcer of the laws of the Universe, *Yamaraja*, rests on the back. The four holy oceans reside in the udder. Sri Ganga, whose mere sight washes our sins off, who flows from the holy feet of Lord Vishnu, exists in the urine of Go. The benevolent Mother *Lakshmi* resides in the Go dung. The *Gandharvas*, *Apsaras* and the *Nagas* reside in the front hooves. All the holy pilgrimages that are there in the various corners of the world exist in the body of the Go. All *devatās* reside in the body of Lord Vishnu and Go has emanated from the body of Lord Vishnu. Hence all *devatās* reside both in the body of Lord Vishnu and that of Go. Therefore human beings address the holy Go as the abode of all *devatās*



Since all *devatās* and Lord Vishnu Himself reside in Go, the results of worshipping Them and the results of going to pilgrimages can be had by simply performing *Go-sevā*!

The *Viśva-rūpa* of the Go has also been explained in the Atharva Veda, *Mahābhārata* and in the *Purāṇas* like *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Padma* and *Bhaviṣya*. Just like the *Viśva-rūpa* (universal form) of Sri Krishna is revealed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the above scriptures reveal the universal form of Go, the divine creature.

Since the holy Go is the abode of all *devatās*, all pilgrimages, the holy Ganga and Lord Vishnu Himself, the results of worshipping Them and the results of going to pilgrimages can be had by simply performing *Go-sevā*!

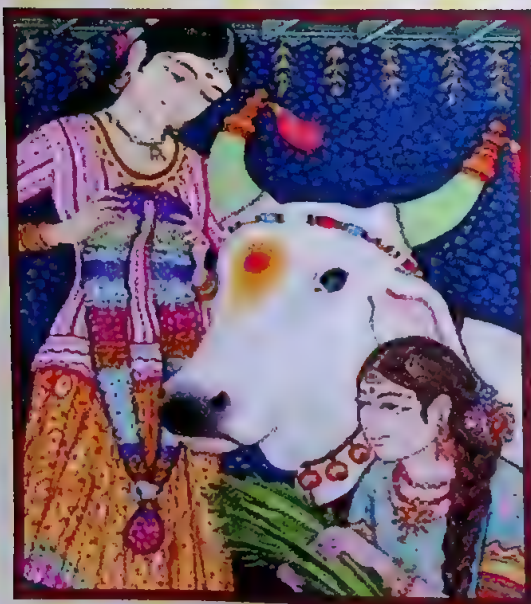
Benefits of Go-sevā

*Yathā gauśca tathā vipro yathā viprastathā hariḥ
Hariryathā tathā gaṅgā ete na hyavṛṣāḥ smṛtāḥ*

"As the Go, so are the knowers of the Vedas; as the knowers of the Vedas, so is Lord Sri Hari; as Lord Sri Hari, so is the Ganga; all these are destroyers of sins."

Padma-purāṇa (Śrīti, 48.155)

If the Go is pleased, all *devatās* as well as the supreme Lord are actually pleased. For instance, when the ritual of *śrāddha* is performed for a departed soul, the *piṇḍa* is fed to the Go after the ceremony is over. If they are satisfied with the *piṇḍa*, the soul for whom the *piṇḍa-dāna* is done immediately achieves a higher plane of existence.



Prosperity in all forms embraces a person who serves the Go. For instance, *Mahābhārata*, *Anuśāsana Parva* 69.12-13 says,

"If a person performs for a year the *vrata* of feeding another person's Go everyday with a fistful of grass before he takes his own meals, all his desires are fulfilled. He receives progeny, fame, prosperity, wealth and affluence and all his inauspiciousness and nightmares come to an end."

Go-sevā also has the power to annihilate sins. *Padma-purāṇa (Śrīti, 57.165)* says,

If a person feeds another person's Go everyday with a fistful of grass before he takes his own meals, all his desires are fulfilled. -*Mahābhārata*

"A person who daily touches a Go after taking bath becomes liberated from all

sinful reactions. Those who smear themselves with the dust from the hooves of the Go are said to have taken bath in all holy places. Such people become free from all types of sin."

One engaged in *Go-sevā* need not be afraid of the strict laws of Yama in the form of death. After death he certainly achieves heavenly planets, to speak the least. Pleasing Go implies pleasing all *devatās*. They in turn give prosperity in all forms to the one who performs or participates in *Go-sevā*. What more can be said, *Go-sevā* has the capacity of even liberating a person from the cycle of birth and death!

A Panacea for the ailing human society

We human beings are also a special creation of the supreme Lord in a different way. It is our duty to maintain His creation the way He wants it to be maintained. If we follow our own whims and fancies, act smart and try to take control of nature, the result will be chaos in the society and distress in human life. Hence, if we wish to get rid of the distress that human beings in many parts of the world are presently going through, we need to align our thoughts and actions with those of the supreme Lord Himself.

How should one start the process of this alignment from the present misaligned state? The answer is, through *Go-sevā*. A mind trained in Western system of education may find this claim to be too simplistic but it is actually true.

It has been explained above how deeply God loves His special creation, the Go. If we human beings love them and serve them too, the Lord will certainly be pleased with us. Consequently, He will manifest in our hearts all those qualities that we require for being the ideal human being that God wants us to become.

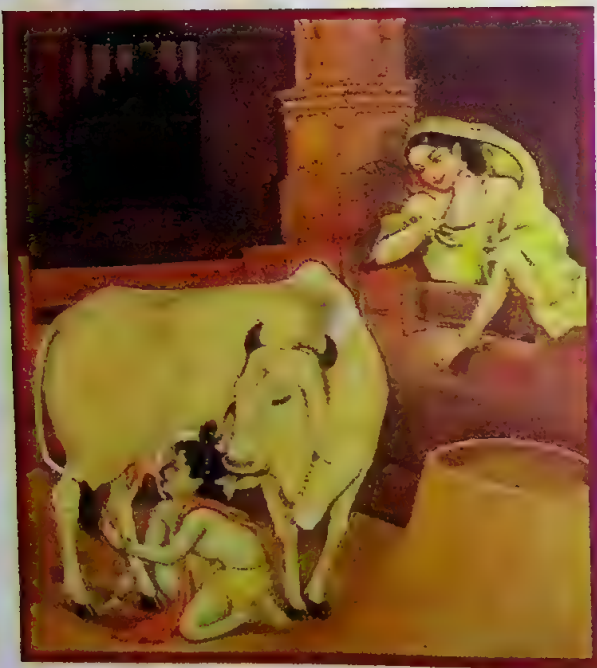


God loves His special creation, the Go. If we human beings love them and serve them too, the Lord will certainly be pleased with us.

Go, the universal mother

When a child weans off his/her mother's milk, it is the milk of the Go, which proves to be best alternative. In fact the milk of Go is considered a near complete food –the best possible substitute for mother's milk. The mother is she who nourishes her own child with her milk whereas the Go is the one who nourishes not only her own calf with her milk but also the entire world! Indeed she is the universal mother! Let alone the fact that she has fed the Creator of all - the Lord Himself when He was in Vraja!

The scriptures that have been manifested by God say "*gāvo viśvasya mātaraḥ*", meaning "Go is the universal mother". One's mother is able to bring up her children with love, affection and care because she has the propensity to selflessly take care of her children. In short, the mother, by being *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* towards her children, is actually practising *ānukūlya* towards them. Since the Go practises *ānukūlya* of God, the Go displays *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* behaviour towards all beings in His creation.



Go is the one who nourishes not only her own calf with her milk but also the entire world!

Furthermore, such is the effect of *Go-sevā* that the qualities of motherly love and affection towards everyone are fostered in the person who serves Go. This means that these feelings become prevalent in the society if *Go-sevā* is taken up in a large scale. It is this motherly love that nurtures all, protects all and makes the human race happy and peaceful. Hence Go has been declared as:

*Mātaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām gāvah
sarva-sukha-pradā*

"Go are mothers of all creatures
and givers of all bliss."

The true meaning of Go-sevā

Sevā of anyone means *ekatā* in heart and mind, and *ānukūlya* in activities, as explained earlier.



One who performs *Go-sevā* must be concerned only about the welfare of Go

Hence, merely giving some food to the Go does not constitute *Go-sevā*. One who performs *Go-sevā* must be concerned only about the welfare of the Go that he serves. The focus of attention, in that case, is not extracting commercial benefit from them, but only to serve them for their contentment, without being concerned about one's personal benefits. The extra milk available after satisfying the calves may be obtained for human consumption. Such milk is full of the subtle qualities that help the consumers become better human beings. If we keep Go they must be treated in the same way as we would treat a member of our family till they die a natural death.

From the fact that all *devis* and *devatās* reside within the Go, we can appreciate the significance of worshiping and serving all divine beings through *Go-sevā* alone!

Go refers to the species of Bharat-Varsh only

At this point it is important to clarify that by the Sanskrit word, "Go", is meant the varieties of Go of Bharat-Varsh only. Whatever has been mentioned above regarding the *niraparādhī* and *paropākārī* nature of Go applies to these varieties only.



A typical Go of Bharat-Varsh. The glories of Go mentioned in the scriptures are applicable only to these varieties of Go, and not to the imported breeds or to breeds mixed with the imported ones.

In fact the Go of this holy land descend from the primordial divine Go called *Kāmadhenu*. The idea of *Kāmadhenu* is an integral part of the ancient culture of this land. She is also well known through her other five forms: *Nandā*, *Sunandā*, *Surabhi*, *Susilā* and *Sumanā*.

Biologically any variety from around the world is classified as the same species (*Bos taurus*) but the scriptural definition of Go applies only to the varieties of cows and bulls that originally belong to Bharat-Varsh. Also, they are not applicable to the mixed breeds (mixed with foreign breeds) of cows and bulls available in large numbers in our country today. The sanctity of Go dung and urine is valid only for the pure holy Go of this holy land. These are the Go with the classical hump, with the loose skin below the neck, with long ears, with the loving expression in the eyes, with the distinctive pleasing odour emanating from the body, with its sweet and *sattvik* milk, and with its special kind of voice that encompasses the sounds of all *Veda-mantras*!

Human Culture, Economy and Go

In this land of Bharat-Varsh, the Go has been an essential part of the human society and culture. They, together with agriculture, are primarily responsible for providing economic support to the nation. The milk and milk-products, while providing health to the human body and mind, also is a source of earning. Similarly, the Go-dung has been a source of revenue when sold as fuel or fertiliser. The bulls are used for transportation and agriculture, thus supporting economic growth. The families that maintain Go are economically prosperous. Several such economically strong families make a society, and eventually a nation economically strong.

Go has always been the basis of the Vedic culture. The Vedas, which originate from the Lord Himself and have been compiled by sages like Vyasa-deva, provide directions to human beings on how to live life peacefully. They proclaim that if Go is taken care of well, the Lord and all *devatās* remain pleased and the society remains peaceful and economically powerful.

Cycles of economic upsurges and depressions, which are closely related to the industrial society, never occur in a region that bases its economy and culture on Go. Requirements of the people of such economically self-sufficient societies are fulfilled through Go, agriculture and cottage industries.

The despicable scenario of Materialism today

Today, the innumerable cow sheds and farms across the world are set up with the idea of making profit from the milk, meat and leather produced. The ideal of *niraparādhī* and *paropakārī* creature that God created for us to serve and learn from, is wantonly tortured for giving more milk, and eventually put to death by cruel means for meat and leather. Will the Supreme Lord be pleased with us if we ill-treat and even kill the creature that He loves most and is attracted by?

What is the fate of those who kill Go for meat?

This is answered here.

"Go killers and cow eaters are condemned to rot in hell for as many thousands of years as there are hair on the body of each Go they eat from." Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (*Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita, Adi Lila, 17.166*)

The world runs by the law of *karma*. As we sow, so shall we reap! As the world sows the seeds of bad *karma* by killing the creature that God loves most, the results appear in the form of sufferings that we go through. Wars, pestilence and natural disasters are only some of the ways the results are received.

The bad news is that even those who claim that they have nothing to do with ill-treating Go are also participating in the process of killing them! This is because almost all in the society are buying leather and many are eating beef. Thus the customers of leather and beef are the people who financially support the system that has been established for killing Go. Hence they are genuinely responsible for the crime – as responsible as the individuals themselves who perform the heinous act of murdering them! The financiers of terrorism are also branded terrorists although they do not actually perform terrorist acts themselves!

One may take note that viable alternatives to leather are available in the market.



The "attractive" leather products have a gruesome story to tell. *Paropakari* and *niraparadhi* Go are bathed alive in boiling water and are beaten to death before they are skinned. Those who pay for the leather products are financiers of these horrifying activities, and hence have to suffer the reactions of their terrible *karma*!

Materialism, which is fast becoming the "trend" of today, does not accept the presence of a conscious being Who is behind the manifestation and maintenance of this universe. Hence it is obvious that they do not accept the fact that Go are a special creation of the Supreme Being. For them Go are just another species meant to be exploited for human benefit. Little do they realise that irrespective of whether they accept the presence of God or not, the fact is that they are all subject to the eternal Laws of the Almighty. Hence their joys and sorrows will be guided by the law of *karma*! Thus they continue to create bad *karma* and suffer, and create more bad *karma*, and suffer even more in different forms

of life, and more, and more, ... and so on forever!

Certain materialists become "scholars" of Indian culture and profess that the ancient Indian *ṛsis* ate beef! One can only deride their gross ignorance of the topic. No scripture sanctions killing of animals in sacrifices. But since they are interested in killing Go, they distort or misunderstand the Vedic statements to interpret that Go were killed in ancient India. Thus they justify their guilty conscience! All their arguments can actually be soundly refuted, but this work does not provide enough space to do so. A separate work is required for this purpose.

In the Vedas there are 137 instances when the term "*aghnyā*" has been used for Go. This word means, "that which cannot be killed." In Vedic culture, which has been given by God Himself for the benefit of the entire human race, the Go has been banned from being killed, let alone be eaten! To quote one of the many instances, the Atharva Veda (4.21) says,

Pra nu vocaṁ cikiteṣu janāya mā gāmanāgāmaditiṁ vadhiṣṭa

"We have declared this to each wise person, never to kill the *niraparādhī* Go!"

Hence an appeal is made to each wise person to understand the significance of serving the divine creature, "Go". Anyone desirous of achieving the highest benefits that the human life has to offer, may get engaged in *Go-seva* directly or indirectly and reap the immeasurable benefits!

Lord Brahma says,

*Asya kāyo mayā sṛṣṭah puraiva poṣaṇaṁ prati
Ata eva mayā dattaṁ varaṁ cātisuśobhanaṁ
Ekajanmani sa mokṣastavāstviti viniścitaṁ
Atraiva ye mṛtā gāvastvāgacchanti mamālayaṁ
Pāpasya kaṇamātrastu teṣāṁ dehe na tiṣṭhati*

"I had created Go in the ancient times for nurturing everybody. Therefore, I had given Go a very special boon – "May you achieve liberation in a single lifetime". Hence, upon dying, the Go comes to my abode. Even the least bit of sin does not rest upon them."

Padma purāṇa sṛṣṭi 45.130-132

“SRI HARIDAS-NIWAS”

AN IDEAL GO-SHALA



*About 5000 years ago
Lord Sri Krishna had appeared
in the holy land of
Vrindavan and had performed various
lilas.*

*In Vrindavan lies a spot called “Kalidaha”,
where Sri Krishna had subdued the Kaliya
snake. Today, at that holy spot stands a
divine ashram,
“Sri Haridas Nīwas”,
which encapsulates, as it were, Sri
Krishna's pristine teachings – untouched
by
today's materialism!*

The Founder

The divine ashram, "Sri Haridas Niwas" is sanctified by the saintly presence of its founder, a reverent soul who is uniquely educated in the scriptures and is venerated by the entire community of *sādhus* in Vrindavan, His Holiness Sri Sri 108 Haridas Shastriji Maharaj.



The founder of "Sri Haridas Niwas" ashram, Sri Sri Haridas Shastri Maharaj ji, an unparalleled expert of the scriptures, and a venerated saint of Vrindavan.

More than ninety years of age, Sri Maharaj ji, as he is known - has been radiating his spiritual potency at this ashram since the days when Vrindavan was full of forests. He is one of the rare contemporary saints of this country who is highly learned in scriptural knowledge. He has achieved laurels in thirteen different branches of Sanskrit studies like *vyākaraṇa*, *kāvya*, *nyāya*, *tarka*, *sāṅkhya*, *mīmāṃsā*, *vedānta*, *vaiṣṇava-darśana*, etc.

A devoted follower of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he still preserves the esoteric knowledge of *bhakti* in its pristine form as taught by Mahaprabhu more than five hundred years ago. He has brought to light for the modern world the concepts of *ekatā* and *ānukūlya* originally expounded by Mahaprabhu. One of the practical methods of realizing this sublime Truth is demonstrated by Maharaj ji through his unique style of *Go-sevā*.

Go-seva: The mood of true seva

As described earlier, the Go, by nature, practise *ānukūlya* for this world. But the human society of today horrendously exploits this *paropakārī* nature of Go for commercial purposes, even to the extent of killing them! Fie upon such human society!

However, here at Sri Haridas Niwas, one experiences the opposite – human beings practise *ānukūlya* towards the Go! There is no endeavour for making commercial utilization of Go; not even of the dung, urine or milk. Selfless service of Go is done under the principles of *anūsāsana* (discipline), *kartavyatā* (dutifulness) and *naitikatā* (ethics), which are the three fundamental principles of dharma.

Ānukūlya personified, Maharaj ji does exactly what pleases the Supreme Lord most – serving Go, the special creation of the Lord. And he is a great source of inspiration for all.

The calves in this holy *Go-śālā* are given a free reign over the quantity of milk they wish to consume. They, right from their birth, experience nothing but love and care in all respects (*ānukūlya*), which makes them lead a healthy and peaceful life. Even the big bulls in the ashram display a serene nature to the extent that even small children play with them at ease.



The calves at Sri Haridas Niwas *go-śālā* experience nothing but love and care in all respects, right from their birth.



Since they are brought up with love and care, even hefty bulls have serene nature. Children play with them fearlessly.



Little calves are protected from rough weather just like we protect our children



Newborn calves are helped to suckle more, after all the milk is meant for them!

Through this, Maharajji demonstrates to the society that if a child is brought up in a similar manner with a mood of *ānukūlya* right from childhood, he grows into a peace loving and a dutiful citizen who works for the welfare of the entire human race.

A Unique Ashram dedicated to Go-sevā

About 35 years ago, *sevā* of Go began in Sri Haridas Niwas with a single Go. Through devoted *sevā* of the Go, their number has increased today to more than 250, and is still increasing. Both male and female members of Go are served like family members with each and every requirement of theirs being lovingly met.

The *Go-sālā* here is maintained exactly in line with what the *Padma-purāṇa* says in *śrī* 48.112-113 about how the up-keep of an ideal *Go-sālā* must be.

*Ātmanah śayanīyasya sadṛśam kārāyedbudhaḥ
Samam nirvāpayedyatnācchīta-vāta-rajastathā
Prāṇasya sadṛše paśyedgām ca sāmānyavigraham*

"An intelligent person must maintain the *Go-sālā* as clean as he would maintain his own bed-room. He should endeavour to protect the *Go-sālā* from chill, heat and dust. Although the Go has the appearance of an ordinary animal, It must be treated like one's own self."



The happy cows and bulls of Sri Haridas Niwas *Go-śālā*



A bull yearns to lick the soft and loving palm of Maharaj ji

The standard of maintenance of the *Go-śālā* at Sri Haridas Niwas matches this scriptural declaration perfectly. The Go are housed in large, spacious *Go-śālās*, complete with lights and fans. Each and every Go has his/her own private space. Some big, hefty bulls are provided with their individual rooms too! Special care is taken to keep the *Go-śālās* clean and healthy round the clock. The feed of every Go is monitored regularly. A routine is followed in the *Go-śālā*, in maintaining which the ashram inmates as well as the workers are involved. Every day these loving creatures are left free to wander in open grounds within the premises of the *Go-śālā*.



The *Go-śālā*, complete with lights and fans for Go, are well maintained by the workers as well as by ashram inmates.



Spacious grounds and buildings for Go



Workers of the *Go-sālā* are provided with living quarters in the ashram



Entrance to the new *Go-sālā* and farmland at Tehra

The medical needs of every Go are promptly taken care of. A qualified veterinary doctor visits the *Go-sālā* regularly.

The workers of the *Go-sālā* are also provided with living quarters in the ashram and they work according to fixed time schedules for taking good care of Go. The *Go-sevā* done here instills within the *sevakas* (those who do *sevā*) love for all.

Since the number of these divine creatures kept swelling in the ashram, the *Go-sālā* has been expanded. A branch has been started in Tehra village, which consists of a farmland attached to a *Go-sālā*. A spacious open space was also provided for the Go to freely roam around.



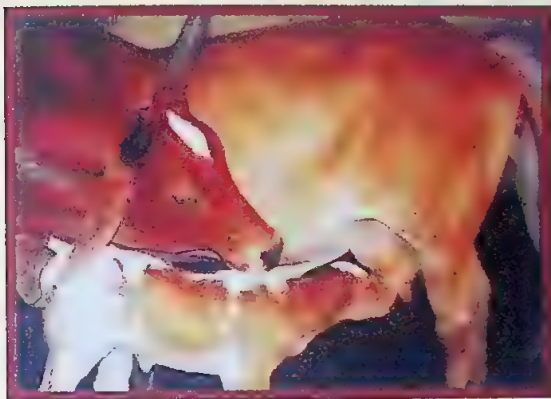
The happy cows and bulls in open grounds within the premises of the *Go-sālā*



Maharaj ji caressing the Go

Since good quality drinking water is not available at Tehra village, special arrangements have been made for procuring and storing pure drinking water for the Go from a distant place.

The farmland attached to the *Go-sālā* is used only for growing fresh green fodder for Go. And all farming is done organically through vermicompost made in-house. Through this farmland, Maharaj ji demonstrates how high quality organic fertiliser from cow-dung compost and vermiculture can bring about a revolution in farming practices around the world and free our agriculture from the use of harmful chemical fertilisers. This endeavour can help mankind preserve the natural eco-system, and thus serve the Lord's creation by practising *ānukūlya* towards it.



A unique feature at Sri Haridas-Niwas *Go-sālā* is that the Go is served only for their contentment, and not for commercial benefits – not even for milk! The calves are free to drink milk to their heart's content.



Maharaj ji inspects the vermiculture site in the farmland attached to the *Go-sālā*.



Free drinking of milk continues till the calves grow up fully and milk secretion of mothers stop. There is no concern in Sri Haridas Niwas for milking the Go for commercial benefits.



Fresh green fodder being cut for Go in machines installed in the ashram.



We worship Lord Sri Krishna but He worships Go. Hence, Maharaj ji says, "*Go bhavan ke bhi bhagavan hain!*" (Go is God of even God Himself!)

Each Go has its own private space. Some big, hefty bulls have rooms of their own, as seen in this picture, where they are kept unchained.



The farmland in Tehra village is used only for growing green fodder for Go. Through organic farming here, Maharaj ji demonstrates how a revolution can be brought about in agriculture without the use of harmful chemicals. Thus we can maintain the creation of God the way He wanted us to maintain it.



Anukūlya through "laddus"!

The love for Go one sees in "Sri Haridas Niwas" is expressed through a unique activity – feeding of *laddus* to each Go! To start with, the best ingredients are purchased from the market. *Halwais*, who are hired, come to the ashram and prepare delicious *laddus* under strict quality control of the ashram inmates. Thus it is ensured that Go, the special creation of God, is served with high quality delicious *laddus* everyday to their heart's content.

Every evening Maharaj ji personally prepares packets of *laddus* for each and every Go, whom he considers to be members of his family. One never sees him hurry through this time consuming process. Like a loving mother, he is patient and thorough. He ensures that no errors occur for the share of each Go.



Maharaj ji while feeding laddus



Free time for the Go near the Hanuman ji temple and samadhi temple.

The Go too wait for him eagerly at all times and reciprocate tender love as he approaches them. He goes to each of them, feeds *laddus* to each, caresses them individually, examines the requirements of each one in detail, checks if they are fed well, and personally tends them when they are sick. Thus he practically demonstrates the meaning of *ānukūlya*. The personal relationship between Maharaj ji and Go is a phenomenon that would take mortals ages to comprehend!

Indeed the *Go-sevā* one sees in this holy ashram is the only one of its kind and anything close to this is rarely seen anywhere else in the world!



Delicious *laddus* are prepared within the ashram premises everyday for feeding the Go. They are prepared under strict quality control to ensure that every Go is really satisfied. About 35 kg of *laddus* are made and fed to the Go daily.



Maharaj ji personally tending the Go



Happy Go basking in the sun!



The Go eagerly await the arrival of Maharaj ji and they reciprocate tender love.

"Sri Haridas Niwas" - Also a Major Centre for Spiritual Devotion

In the centre of the ashram is located a beautiful temple that Maharaj ji had constructed after being inspired by a divine vision. The temple is dedicated to Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu, Sri Gadadhar Pandit, Sri Govinda-deva and Srimati Radharani. There is also a small temple dedicated to Sri Hanuman ji, and a samadhi temple of Maharaj ji's gurudev, Sri Vinod Bihari Goswami Maharaj.



The main temple in
"Sri Haridas Niwas"



Temple of Sri Hanumanji (known as Sri Haridaseshwar) and Samadhi Temple of Sri Vinod Bihari Goswami Maharaj

While "Sri Gadadahra Gaurahari Press" in the ashram publishes books, a library with a massive collection of books and manuscripts is also available to the true seekers of knowledge.

Maharaj ji is deeply concerned about the welfare of the entire human race through the right education. Apart from imparting scriptural education, Maharaj ji demonstrates the highest truths through his personal example and through the sacred *Go-sevā*, which has the potential to bring about a radical change in the society for the better.



The deities in the main temple. Left to right: Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu, Sri Gadadhar Pandit, Sri Govindadev, Srimati Radharani.



Maharaj ji during one of the discourses in the ashram. Students flock to him from different corners of the world to hear him expound the esoteric knowledge of the scriptures in simple language.

People from different corners of the world who wish to seek spiritual wisdom flock to Sri Haridas Niwas. They study and practise under the guidance of one of the greatest saints of today's times. They also participate in the practical demonstrations of knowledge and reap the benefits of performing the divine act of true *Go-sevā*.

Devoid of pomp and show, the ashram, with humble bearings, acts as a beacon of shining light for the one who is blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

Epilogue

While people make long and arduous pilgrimages, or take up difficult penances to please certain *devīs* and *devatās*, little do they realize that all pilgrimages and all the *devīs* and *devatās* themselves choose to dwell in the *Pavitra Go*!

As materialism tries to annihilate the qualities of compassion and selfless service from the society, it is time to rise and shoulder the responsibility of protecting the gentle *Go*, the symbol of *ānukūlya*, from the hands of the cruel materialists! This will immensely benefit the entire mankind.

Let us enlighten ourselves with the truth about *Go* and work towards restoring the right status that has always been accorded to them in Bharat-Varsha. The Lord will be pleased with us indeed! Come and participate, directly or indirectly, in the work of this unique *Go-sevā* here at Sri Haridas Niwas!

Come!

Save the Pavitra Go!

Get the blessings of the Lord!

Have your desires fulfilled!

*yayā sarvamidam vyāptam jagat sthāvara-jaṅgamaṁ
tām dhenum śirasā vande bhūtabhāvyasya mātaram*

"I bow my head to the *Go* who pervades this entire universe consisting of animate and inanimate objects and who is the mother of both past and future."

(*Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana*, 80.15)



Readers interested in knowing more on this subject are invited to visit Sri Haridas Niwas. Please contact:

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Sri Sri Haridas Shastri Maharaj ji, a champion for the cause of Go-seva in today's society, with his Go, whom he considers members of his family.

Once Indra asked the creator Brahma, why the spiritual abode of Go (Goloka) was situated above all abodes (lōkas) of this material universe. Lord Brahma answered thus:

*Dhārayanti prajāścaiva payasā haviṣā tathā | etāsām tanayāścāpi kṛṣiyogamupāsate ||
 Janayanti ca dhānyāni bijāni vividhāni ca | tato yajñāḥ pravartante havyaṁ kavyaṁ ca sarvaśaḥ ||
 Payo dadhi ghṛtaṁ caiva puṇyāścaitā surādhipa | vahanti vividhān bhārān kṣuttrīṣāparipīditāḥ ||
 Munīṁśca dhārayantiha prajāścaivāpi karmaṇā | vāsavākūtavāhinyah karmaṇā sukṛtena ca ||
 Upariṣṭāto'smākaṁ vasantyetāḥ sadaiva hi | evaṁ te kāraṇaṁ śakra nivāsakṛtamadyai ||*

"Go maintains the human society by providing milk and ghee. They also contribute to agriculture and they produce varieties of grains and seeds. The yajnas, the ghee offerings and pinda offerings to forefathers is possible only because of Go. Milk, curd and ghee are obtained from them. They pull various loads by tolerating hunger and thirst. By their activities they support the Munis and other subjects. There is no crookedness or hypocrisy in their behavior. They work for the welfare of all. Therefore O Indra! They live in the highest abode which is beyond all other abodes."

(Mahābhārata, anusāsana 83.18-22)